

ABSTRACT

A.D. Marble & Company of Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, conducted a Phase IB Archaeological Investigation for the proposed SR 1, Little Heaven Grade Separated project in the community of Little Heaven, which is located north of Frederica in Murderkill Hundred, Kent County, Delaware. The study is part of the SR 1 Corridor Capacity Preservation Program, and it was performed for Century Engineering and the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT). The intent of the proposed undertaking (project) is to alleviate vehicle congestion on Bay Road (SR 1/US 113) and its intersections with Bowers Beach Road, Skeeter Neck Road, Mulberrie Point Road, and Clapham Road (US 113A) in Little Heaven.

In 2004, A.D. Marble & Company initiated the Phase IB archaeological study. DelDOT temporarily terminated project funding in 2005, which led to the incompleteness of the study. In 2005, Scott Emory composed a Little Heaven Phase IB management summary based on this first session of the study. The bulk of this final session of work took place in October 2007 and January 2008, and this document presents the results of this recent Phase IB work and serves as an addendum to the earlier 2005 management summary.

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) was defined by the proposed right-of-way (ROW) limits of the project. The APE has been divided into seven distinct land parcels or study areas. Parcels 1 to 6 were delineated in 2004. Parcel 7 was recently added to the study area in 2007. Emory (2005) provided a detailed summary of the first session of the survey, which included survey of Parcels 1 to 5. Reviewed here are the investigations of Parcels 6 and 7. Parcel 6 (Areas 6-0 to 6-6) primarily consists of residential landscape. Parcel 7 primarily consists of a plowed field. Parcel 7 also included the northwest corner of the intersection of Buffalo Road and Clapham Road. Varied field methods (controlled surface collection and/or shovel test pit [STP] excavations) were implemented. An STP survey was performed in Parcel 6. A pedestrian survey was conducted in the plowed field, and a single shovel test was excavated at the Clapham/Buffalo intersection in Parcel 7.

We discovered that Parcel 6 contains no significant archaeological resources, and it is our opinion that no further archaeological investigation is warranted. Parcel 7, however, contains a turn-of-the-twentieth-century high-density historic artifact scatter that appears to correspond to the location of an unnamed structure that, based on background research, existed from the 1860s to the 1950s. Research also suggests that the structure may have been associated with an area that was referred to colloquially as “Little Hell,” an African-American settlement that was established in the late nineteenth century.

A.D. Marble & Company recommends that Parcel 7 should undergo a Phase II archaeological resource evaluation survey that includes additional background research and subsurface testing to illuminate the horizontal and vertical contexts of the historic artifact concentration and to discover if the artifact concentration is related to a buried structure. If a structure is identified, cultural resource managers should evaluate its integrity and eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places. Additional background research should also help to establish if the structure that stood at this location was a residence that was part of the African-American settlement in Little Heaven.